

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 EUR-25 SS-15 H-02 PRS-01

PPT-02 PA-03 USIE-00 INR-10 INRE-00 CIAE-00 L-03

RSC-01 RSR-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /090 W
----- 046957

O R 121444 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2099

AMEMBASSY ROME NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: CASC, PINS, LE (CAPUTO, PHILIP)

SUBJ: RELEASE BY FEDAYEEN OF AMERICAN JOURNALIST

REF: BEIRUT 5428

1. CAPUTO, CORRESPONDENT CHICAGO TRIBUNE WHO HELD BY
FEDAYEEN IN BEIRUT REFUGEE CAMP SINCE MAY 7, RELEASED
MID- AFTERNOON MAY 12. HE IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS
AND PLANS RETURN ROME FIRST AVAILABLE PLANE, PROBABLY
MAY 13.

2. FOR ROME: PLEASE ADVISE WIFE, JILL CAPUTO; HOME
PHONE 345-1658, OFFICE 679-1659.

3. EMBASSY LEARNED OF RELEASE WHEN ARTHUR VEYSEY,
CHICAGO TRIBUNE EUROPEAN REP WHO ARRIVED BEIRUT
FROM EUROPE MORNING MAY 12, CALLED FROM ST. GEORGES HOTEL
TO SAY CAPUTO HAD JUST ARRIVED IN TOW OF ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR
YAZID. LATTER ANNOUNCED TO ASSEMBLED JOURNALISTS IN BAR
THAT HE HAD BROUGHT ABOUT RELEASE SINGLE- HANDED AND WITH NO
REAL HELP OF GOL OR AMEMBASSY BEIRUT.

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4. IN TALK WITH CAPUTO EMBOFFS LEARNED FOLLOWING OF HIS DETENTION: INTERROGATIONS WERE EXTREME LEFT- WING, PDFLP OR PFLP (CAPUTO SAID HE SAW PFLP LITERATURE IN DETENTION QUARTERS); HE NEVER MAL- TREATED DURING 37 HOURS OF INTERROGATION WHICH WAS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING CAPUTO WAS CIA AGENT ALTHOUGH SOME QUESTIONING AIMED AT HIS TIES WITH ISRAEL; HE BEGAN SENSE HIS IMPENDING RELEASE EVENING MAY 11 (SHORTLY AFTER GOL ARMY WAS BEARING DOWN HARD ON FEDAYEEN IN MIXED COMMISSION).

5. VEYSEY SPENT 2 HOURS WITH CONSOFF JUST BEFORE RELEASE IN EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF FACTS ON DETENTION KNOWN TO DATE. VEYSEY WISHED WORK CLOSELY WITH EMBASSY AND OFFERED ANY ASSISTANCE HE MIGHT PROVIDE IN PROVIDING GOL OR FEDAYEEN CAPUTO' S BACKGROUND.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY DOUBTS YAZID, ALTHOUGH HELPFUL, PLAYED DECISIVE ROLE IN RELEASE. HE ACTED AS SUITABLE GO- BETWEEN TO PICK UP CAPUTO. (YAZID WAS CALLED BY FEDAYEEN AT FONMIN LUNCH AND TOLD TO COME TO SABRA CAMP FOR CAPUTO). WE BELIEVE SEVERAL FACTORS BROUGHT ABOUT RELEASE, PRIMARILY, FEDAYEEN SATISFIED CAPUTO NOT SPY, GOL PRESSURE MAY 11, YAZID INTERVENTION, AND TESTIMONY OF EYE- WITNESSES THAT CAPUTO HELD IN SABRA CAMP, AND NOT " NON- EXISTENT" AS FEDAYEEN INSISTED IN BEGINNING, INCLUDING TO YAZID. HOUGHTON

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